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# Controllable Development

*The challenges of controlling and sustaining development are legion. For instance, this issue looks at the potential benefits and dangers inherent in genetically modified plants (GMOs) and their role in advancing modern agriculture – helping us avoid the “Malthusian trap,” a specter that has haunted mankind for centuries (p. 4).*

*Worldwide, development is chiefly driven by new scientific discoveries and inventions. As cases in point, on p. 8 we investigate what’s in store for contemporary physics with the launch of the world’s most powerful particle accelerator, while on p. 16 we discuss how an innovative gamma burst detector called “Pi of the Sky” is keeping close watch over the whole heavens. Genetic research on male infertility, in turn, may resolve many of the problems underlying human reproductive failure (p. 28).*

*But to ensure human society stays on the right track, “doing research” is itself not enough. The public needs to be kept thoroughly informed about what new technologies have to offer. As we discuss with Prof. Krzysztof Jakubowski (p. 46), scientists themselves need to appreciate how important efforts to boost the public’s science awareness really are. A science-savvy society will be better prepared to take on new challenges as they arise: even as seemingly inconspicuous a challenge as the invasion of the Asian ladybird, now conquering the world at incredible speed (p. 34). Knowledge gleaned from research can also inspire healthier choices of lifestyle. On p. 20, we illustrate new evidence about how the right or wrong diet can affect the early development of the mammalian digestive system.*

*The development of society also engenders subtle changes in the social fabric. The article “Poland’s Aging Workforce” (p. 12) forecasts how a reduction in working-age population will affect rural development, while the article “21st Century Cinderella” (p. 24) explores how spouses’ levels of education match up in contemporary married couples.*

*Lastly, our discussion with world-renown embryologist Prof. Andrzej K. Tarkowski touches upon fascinating aspects of biological development, the pure beauty of discovery, and the utility of scientific research (p. 40).*

ACADEMIA staff



“Creation of the World,” Museum of Art in Łódź

**Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz (1885–1939), widely known as “Witkacy,” was a Polish playwright, painter, photographer, prose-writer, philosopher, and art theorist, ill-appreciated in his lifetime but now recognized as a great artist far ahead of his time. One of his major written works, *Insatiability*, explores the potential demons of modern civilization and development**